

Policies and Practices Work Group

Final Charge

The National Conversation on Public Health and Chemical Exposures is working to develop an action agenda for strengthening the nation's approach to protecting the public from harmful chemical exposures.

Charge

In order to protect public health, the Policies and Practices Workgroup will determine prioritized actions that can be taken through legislation, regulation and policy that will prevent harmful chemical exposures and spur the development and use of safer alternatives.

To accomplish this charge, the Policies and Practices Work Group will identify policies and practices of government agencies and the private sector that will facilitate accomplishing these goals and highlight opportunities and examples for achieving them. The Policies and Practices Work Group will use the following "layers of prevention" framework to guide its work:

1. Primary prevention – Preventing harm by eliminating and/or reducing exposures to harmful chemicals and by spurring the development and use of safer and healthier alternatives
2. Secondary prevention – Addressing harm by better producing, using, and managing chemicals, and including greater use of safer alternatives
3. Tertiary prevention – Addressing harm caused by historic practices, by protecting the health of at-risk populations and contaminated communities

For each layer, the following questions would be answered:

- What is the baseline or current situation?
- What should policy approaches look like if they are to strengthen this prevention layer?
- What actions can be taken to eliminate disparities and inequities in preventing or addressing exposures to harmful chemicals?
- What is the role of federal, state, and local agencies in promoting these policies?
- What is the role of the private sector, including business, academia, and NGOs in promoting these policies?
- What resources and incentives are necessary for government and private entities to get there?

The group will focus its efforts on 1) identifying a set of universal principles that protect the public and workers from harmful chemical exposures, 2) characterizing and analyzing these principles as they relate to select policies and proposals through the lens of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention, and 3) developing recommendations grounded in these principles.